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LETTER DATED 7 FEBRUARY 1996 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith, through you, for the information of the Security Council, the outcome of the fifth special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission held in Geneva on 5 February 1996.

The Governing Council elected Poland, represented in the person of its Permanent Representative, H.E. Mr. Ludwik Dembinsky, as Vice-President, to replace the Czech Republic, whose membership in the Council expired on 31 December 1995.

The Council then listened to a report from the Executive Secretary of the Commission, H.E. Mr. Carlos Alzamora. The report highlighted the significance of the 6 February 1996 talks between Iraq and the United Nations on achieving the humanitarian formula of "oil for food" foreseen in Security Council resolution 986 (1995), in the light of the positive implications the success of such talks could have for the Commission's ability to honour its commitments and pay a substantial number of accumulated compensation awards. In more specific terms, the implementation of that resolution over 12 months would yield to the Compensation Fund US$ 1,200 million, an amount that equals the compensation awards already issued for hundreds of thousands of individual claimants in categories A and C.

Regarding late claims by individual claimants in categories A, B, C and D, the Governing Council approved a recommendation by its subgroup to accept only claims submitted by Yemen and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. Moreover, the Council responded positively to a request by the Government of Yemen to grant it a further extension of the deadlines for filing claims in different categories, in the light of the civil war in Yemen in 1994. The Governing Council decided that any other forthcoming late individual claims (categories A, B, C and D) would be rejected directly by the secretariat without referring them to the Council.

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With regard to late claims in categories E (corporate claims) and F (government claims), all claims filed after the designated deadlines were accepted for processing by the Governing Council. However, the Council made it clear that it would apply strict criteria, on a case-by-case basis, when dealing with any other E or F claims filed after 1 January 1996.

In the course of the meeting, the Executive Secretary introduced his new Deputy, Mr. Robert Souria, who replaces Mr. Liviu Bota.

The Governing Council agreed to hold its next regular session from 28 to 30 May 1996.

Finally, I would like to mention that all delegations were keen to follow developments in the New York talks between Iraq and the United Nations closely and requested that they be kept informed. The Council expressed optimism that such talks would lead to a successful outcome that could ensure a sustained financial flow to the Compensation Fund in order to meet the expectations of millions of claimants all over the world.

(Signed) Giuseppe BALDOCCI
President
Governing Council of the United
Nations Compensation Commission